



# DAVIS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## News Release

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## Family Meals – An Investment In Your Child’s Future

(Clearfield, Utah) – Did you know that simply eating regular meals together as a family can help you raise healthier, more well-adjusted children? September is Family Meals Month according to the proclamation issued by Utah Governor Gary Herbert.

Davis County Health Department encourages families to make time to eat together during breakfast, lunch, or dinner... even eating a few meals a week together can make a difference.

“With the fast-paced modern American lifestyle, many parents struggle to find time for planning, shopping, and preparing meals,” said Andrea Judd, a health educator with the department. “Coordinating schedules can be tricky, but spending meal times together is invaluable.”

Lewis Garrett, director of Davis County’s health department said, “Recent research indicates the extra effort to eat together really pays off for your child. The simple practice of eating meals together as a family can help your children thrive emotionally, socially, academically, behaviorally, and physically.”

“Family meal time allows children to bond with the family, and to watch and learn skills, values, and habits from the family environment,” said Garrett.

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According to Judd, the Utah State University Extension reports children from families who eat together 5 or more times a week generally eat more fruits and vegetables, are more likely to make healthy choices when they are on their own, are better able to manage negative emotions, and more often learn appropriate ways to share thoughts, feelings, and opinions.

Other long-term benefits include being more likely to make A’s and B’s in school, having a larger vocabulary, and increasing the likelihood of avoiding drug and alcohol use in the teen years.

“Maximize bonding time and make family meals a success by turning off the television and other devices,” said Judd. “Involve the whole family in meal planning, preparing foods, and clean-up.”

Get the most out of your dollar and time while making family meals a realistic and fun experience by visiting the USU Extension website at <https://extension.usu.edu/foodsense/>.

“Davis County Health Department’s Pinterest page contains healthy recipe ideas to add variety to your menus,” said Judd. The page is at <http://www.pinterest.com/daviscohealth/>

For more information about September Family Meals Month or any of DCHD’s nutrition and physical activity efforts, contact Judd at [ajudd@daviscountyutah.gov](mailto:ajudd@daviscountyutah.gov).

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